

Mr. LOTT. Will the Senator yield?

Mr. MURKOWSKI. I am happy to yield to the Senator.

Mr. LOTT. I thought there was going to be a meeting last night between key players on both sides of the aisle to meet with the administration and see if some compromise could be worked out. I am told that meeting never occurred.

Mr. MURKOWSKI. The majority leader is correct. We were ready to have the meeting, and we were advised by the White House representative that they had no authority and were not familiar with the specifics of the bill and they wanted us to submit a bill, items which we would agree to take out.

As chairman of that committee I feel a responsibility, bipartisan, both Democrats and Republicans, to try to represent them in a conference mode as opposed to arbitrarily taking out their sections to accommodate the administration.

We have, for Senator HEFLIN, who is retiring, Selma to Montgomery Historic Trail designation, the historic black college funding; for Senator SIMON and Senator MOSELEY-BRAUN, the Illinois and Michigan canal, Calumet Ecological Park study; for Senator JOHNSTON and Senator BREAUX, Civil War Center, Louisiana University, the Laura Hudson Visitor Center; Senators KENNEDY and KERREY, and retiring Congressman STUDDS, Boston Harbor Islands park establishment, Blackstone heritage area, New Bedford establishment.

I cannot understand why, after all this work, there is still objection. I encourage the majority leader to continue to work on, and I stand ready to try to meet the objections of my colleagues. I understand there is a hold now from the administration, and I think it is fair to say we have an obligation, certainly, relative to a process here, and as an authorizer, if the White House is going to line-item veto everything, we might as well go out of business.

I encourage the majority leader to continue the effort because we are not very far away, and I stand ready to be here all night if necessary, come in and meet with any group, to try to address this.

I thank my colleague.

Mr. LOTT. I yield to the Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. NICKLES. One, on the parks bill, I want to commend Chairman MURKOWSKI and other members on the Energy Committee who worked hard to make this happen. This is a large bill, and unfortunately now it has a lot of items throughout the year that many of us have been working on for a long, long time.

The Senator from Alaska has been generous enough to withdraw one of the bills he felt very strongly about, that was important to his State, so we could get it signed. I asked him to do that. I appreciate his willingness to do it.

The Senator from Minnesota dropped an item. Again, we heard it being in there meant it would be vetoed, so we dropped two or three of the most contentious items. We dropped a project in Utah that, again, other people talked about would bring a certain veto.

Now, all of a sudden—we thought we had really taken away the veto objective so we could pass this bill. I committed to the Senator from California that I would try to help pass the Presidio bill this year. I want to maintain that commitment. I would like to pass this bill.

I urge my colleagues to work together. This bill has been put together in a bipartisan fashion. I have not counted up the number of Democrat and the number of Republican bills, but there are a lot on both sides of the aisle that impact parks all across the country and most of the States across the country. It would really be a shame to have that much work and that much time invested in that bill not to see it passed this year.

I compliment my colleague from Alaska and also the majority leader. I hope we will find a way to be able to work out the differences and pass this bill and get it signed into law before we adjourn the 104th Congress.

Let me make an announcement on behalf of the majority leader. I announce there will be no further rollcall votes tonight. The Senate obviously will be working tonight, in various conferences, trying to work out differences both on the continuing resolution and on the immigration and the parks bill. There will be work done tonight but there will be no further rollcall votes tonight.

I announce on behalf of the majority leader the Senate will reconvene at 10 a.m. tomorrow morning and we will try to give as much advance notice to all Senators prior to any recorded rollcall votes. As of now, there has not been one ordered, but Senators should stand on notice there may well be a recorded rollcall vote in the event we are able to come to an agreement on the continuing resolution, the parks bill or the immigration bill.

I thank my colleague from Kentucky.

Mr. MURKOWSKI. I wonder if I may be recognized for 1 minute relative to advising my colleagues of the status of the parks omnibus package.

It is my understanding that the appropriations subcommittee chairman has indicated it will not include specific items taken from the park omnibus bill and put on the appropriation CR. Now, that is a matter outside the control of the Senator from Alaska as chairman of the Energy and Natural Resource Committee. I think that has been clearly stated, and it has been reinforced by the Speaker of the House.

What I am encouraging, obviously, is that we proceed with this package. I agree, if it is in the interests of my colleagues to put the package on the appropriations as an entire package, I have no objection to that. Otherwise,

the alternative is to proceed as we have, try to address the objections from the other side, and get on with it.

For those who think we will cherry pick it out and put specific portions on the appropriations CR and pass it there, that is not going to be an available alternative. We will simply lose for this year and have to start again. I hope that will not happen.

Mr. FORD. Mr. President, we are getting into a position where everybody seems to think we have to get out. Our salary still goes on. We still get paid whether we are here or not. I think we might as well stay here and earn our keep. We do not have to get out tomorrow. We do not have to get out Monday. We do not have to get out next Friday. We can go ahead and pass a continuing resolution and we could stay here and pass some bills or we can give a short-term continuing resolution for 3 or 4 days and we can work things out.

But we appear to be pushed up against a wall: you have to get out, got to do this, or it is dead. There is no such thing, unless the majority leader wants to take us out, and then things are dead.

I feel like we are being pushed awfully hard here just because tomorrow night we want to get out or Monday we want to get out. I understand everybody wants to go home and campaign. Let them go home and campaign, and the rest of us can stay here and work. That suits me fine.

FAA REAUTHORIZATION CONFERENCE REPORT

Mr. FORD. Mr. President, I want to make one comment about the express carrier we got the objection on to the FAA. I have been advised by legal counsel—not representing either side in this controversy—that every fact of law has sustained the express portion of the ICC bill. It was to be in there because nothing should be narrower or wider. Nobody should get anything when they pass the ICC legislation.

So I understand where we are coming from, and I understand whose fight it is in. I hate to be in the catch-22. We can stay a while if that's what they want to do, offer a cloture petition, and we will have 30 hours, and we can drive right on. I don't mind staying here. I don't want to any more than anybody else. But if that's the way the game is going to be played, I understand how to play it. If we get 60 votes, then we will have to vote on it. If we have to vote on it and we pass it, then it goes to the President. That is the end of it.

If you want to stay around a while, keep objecting to this one, file a cloture petition, we will get cloture and get our 30 hours and do our thing around here, Mr. President.

THE BOUNDARY WATERS CANOE AREA WILDERNESS

Mr. GRAMS. Mr. President, I rise today to speak on behalf of the people